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SUBJECT: IRAQ FORCE ADJUSTMENT DOESN'T CHANGE ARMENIAN
COMMITMENT TO COALITION

REF: A) STATE 229317 B) YEREVAN 2121

Classified By: CDA A.F. Godfrey for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

1. (S) The Charge d'Affaires delivered reftel points regarding U.S. force level reductions in Iraq during December 22 meetings with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Arman Kirakossian and Deputy Minister of Defense General-Lieutenant Artur Aghabekyan. Aghabekyan and Kirakossian both noted the Armenian National Assembly's December 8 decision to extend deployment of a non-combatant contingent for an additional year (ref B), and said U.S. force level reductions would neither effect the GOAM's decision to re-deploy nor jeopardize Armenia's commitment to the coalition.

2. (S) Aghabekyan and Kirakossian both noted that the "relatively small" reduction in force in comparison to the total number of U.S. troops serving in Iraq would have "little impact" on coalition efforts. Kirakossian told the Charge that "Armenia will remain a steady coalition partner," while Aghabekyan maintained that Armenia's non-combatant contingent -- currently preparing for a mid-January rotation -- had no intention of backing out on its commitment. "You'll have no problem with us," he said.
GODFREY